

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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WEDNESDAY MARCH 10, 2004

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I N S I D E

See NORITA on Page 8

See HOUSE on Page 8

Local Milestones

SAIPANCELL
CMYK

CARS UNLIMITED


CENTURY TRAVEL




WEATHER FORECAST

PICTURE TIME: 1:00 AM., MARCH 9, 2004
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.


Fresh to strong trade winds across much of Micronesia converging into lighter winds near the Equator are producing scattered showers between the Equator and 8n from 130e to 153 and between the Equator and 6n from 160e to 180. A cold front stretches from 25n161e to 20n146e and continues as a shear line to 19n130e. Low- and mid-level clouds...light rain and showers associated this feature extend up to 200 miles north of the boundary. Trade wind convergence south of the cold front/shear line is producing low clouds and showers between 12n and 18n from 132e to 150e. This area includes the Mariana Islands.




SAIPAN AND TINIAN
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 15-20 mph. Highs near 87. Lows near 76.




GUAM AND ROTA
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 15-20 mph. Highs near 87. Lows near 76.




PALAU
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15 kt.




POHNPEI
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15 kt.




YAP AND ULITHI
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15-20 kt.






















KOSRAE
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 10-15 kt.



CHUUK
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15-20 kt.



MAJURO
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.
Winds: East at 15-20 kt.

CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
 Auckland	Sunny	71F (22C)	60F (16C)
 Beijing	Sunny	65F (18C)	48F (9C)
 Hong Kong	Sunny	74F (23C)	61F (16C)
 Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	82F (28C)	68F (20C)
 London, England	Sunny	45F (7C)	30F (-1C)
 Los Angeles	Sunny	79F (26C)	59F (15C)
 Manila	Partly Cloudy	88F (31C)	73F (23C)
 Melbourne	Sunny	75F (24C)	59F (15C)
 Miami	Partly Cloudy	72F (22C)	54F (12C)
 New York City	Cloudy	40F (4C)	34F (1C)
 Osaka	Partly Cloudy	37F (3C)	25F (-4C)
 Paris	Partly Cloudy	38F (3C)	25F (-4C)
 Pusan	Partly Cloudy	53F (12C)	39F (4C)
 Rome	Cloudy	49F (9C)	30F (-1C)
 Salem, Oregon	Partly Cloudy	60F (16C)	40F (4C)
 San Francisco	Sunny	68F (20C)	52F (11C)
 Seoul	Partly Cloudy	47F (8C)	35F (2C)
 Tokyo, Japan	Partly Cloudy	42F (6C)	36F (2C)
 Washington, DC	Cloudy	45F (7C)	34F (1C)





VERIZON 611
CMYK

SHELL
CMYK

Helping prepare CNMI’s future business leaders

With the many changes occurring in the workplace today, it is crucial for individuals to develop the necessary job and business skills and acquire the relevant knowledge that will prepare them for successful careers in the future. The Northern Marianas College Business Department provides quality education and training to prepare the people of the CNMI for leadership and business management careers in private industry and the public sector.

The Business Department offers students the option of pursuing an Associate in Arts degree, an Associate in Applied Science degree, a Certificate of Completion, or a Certificate of Achievement in various career ladder tracks in business, tourism/hospitality, or computer applications areas.

Degree and certificate programs are currently offered in accounting, business management, hospitality management, computer applications, sales and marketing, international business, and office technology administration. These degree and certificate programs are designed to provide marketable job skills that will enable students to pursue careers in banking, the tourism industry, communications companies, retail businesses, government agencies, and other business sectors.

The department also provides students with various opportunities to work with public and private sector organizations, and learn from the experiences of community leaders through their guest speaker program. Numerous speakers representing government agencies, the hospitality industry, the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, and other organizations share their wealth of knowledge and experience with students as guest speakers in the classroom.

The Business Department is located in the V.S. Sablan Vocational Training Center (Building V), which offers some of the newest air-conditioned classrooms on campus. These classrooms also offer access to extensive audio-visual tools, including wireless Internet connectivity, that greatly enhance student learning and enjoyment.

The As Terlaje campus’ four state-of-the-art computer labs feature new Pentium+ class computers as well as a Macintosh lab.

The Business Department faculty members bring with them decades of teaching and actual industry experience to the classroom. Students will be provided with an education that is not only academically solid, but practical as well. In addition, the faculty have strong ties to the CNMI business community and industry leaders. This relationship allows NMC faculty the opportunity to integrate business needs into academic programs, which makes NMC graduates more employable.

Additionally, with excellent student to instructor ratios, averaging about 12 students per instructor, students are assured of easy access and extra help, if

needed. The faculty are unique in that they truly care about their students, and getting to know each student and recognizing his/her needs is something they pride themselves in, and is a special bonus that students could not necessarily receive at a larger college or university.

NMC’s current Business De-

partment faculty includes Acting Department chair Larry Lee, Perry Conner, Dr. John Griffin, Wil Maui, Bernie Sablan, Scott Tan, and Rik Villegas.

Whether you are pursuing a degree, considering transferring to a four-year institution or simply looking to enhance your job skills, the NMC Business Department can help you build a solid educational foundation and develop your managerial and leadership skills, visit or call us today. For more information, call 234-5498, ext. 1822 or 1827, or visit our web site at www.nmcnet.edu.

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Opinion

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

Spinning the Guard

If politics were logical, President Bush might be expected to steer clear of any assemblage of National Guard members.

After all, he's ordered the largest overseas deployment of Guard troops since World War II—they now constitute one-third of U.S. forces in Iraq and Afghanistan—and he's extended their tours so often that guardsmen and women have been subject to a de facto draft.

Further, the administration stoutly resisted congressional efforts to expand military health care benefits for Guard members and their families.

Then there's that murky business about Bush's own days in the National Guard. The current flap about related memos notwithstanding, there's no dispute that Bush was able to avoid service in Vietnam by landing what was then a coveted spot in the Guard, and that his attendance record was spotty.

But in an arena where style matters more than substance, Bush didn't dodge this record. He marched right into a conference of the National Guard Association this week and boasted about it.

He was proud, he said, to be one of 19 presidents who served in the Guard; he sympathized with the hardships of call-ups, alerts and mobilizations; and he claimed credit for extending military health benefits to Guard families 90 days before and six months after active-duty service—though Congress all but shoved the provision down his throat.

You've got to admire the guy's nerve. He's clearly calculated that if he acts like he's got nothing to feel guilty about, people will assume that's the case. Certainly, he got no complaints from the audience, which cheered him heartily.

In fact, polls show Bush has a large and growing lead among veterans in his contest with Democratic nominee John Kerry, a decorated veteran who volunteered for combat duty in Vietnam.

Kerry is addressing the National Guard conference Thursday, focusing on Mr. Bush's "go it alone" war in Iraq, which he calls a "catastrophic" decision that has resulted in the loss of more than 1,000 U.S. troops and has needlessly overextended Guard and Reserve forces. The challenger is supported in that view by a group called Military Families Speak Out, which argues that Guard members who signed up to "stay at home and serve their country" should never have been sent overseas.

But in the through-the-looking-glass world of politics, Kerry has been unable to strike a chord with most of the military folks who should be a natural constituency. They've been more receptive to attacks on his combat heroism than to questions about Bush's stateside service, and tell pollsters they are more comfortable with Bush as commander in chief.

Seems like acting the part shouldn't be more important than living it, but perhaps that makes too much sense.

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A warning in the winds

By MARK LYNAS
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

Watching storm after powerful storm plow into the U.S. coastline this year, I can't help wondering if the world's weather is trying to tell us something. To someone like me, who has been tracking global warming and its effects for several years, it almost seemed as though the storm was trying to deliver a forceful reminder of the reality of climate change and the need to act now to address it.

The intensity of this storm season has brought the issue to many minds, and with reason. So far, 2004 has been an extraordinarily potent one for hurricanes. But how much of it is due to global warming?

Let's look at the facts. Despite a late start to the season, the total of eight tropical cyclones (the catchall term for low-pressure systems over tropical waters) reaching tropical storm or hurricane strength last month set a new August record—the average is four for that stage in the season. The run of storms has continued unabated into September.

On the Web site of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is a graph showing how tropical Atlantic sea surface temperatures have risen steadily between 2000 and 2004. To many, this suggests a global warming fingerprint: The accumulation of greenhouse gases, principally carbon dioxide, has driven world temperatures to new heights (2002 and 2003 tied for second place after 1998 as the warmest years ever). The seas are slowly heating up, too, providing more energy for tropical storms.

Case closed? Not quite. The true picture is actually a good deal more complex. Despite this rising warmth, only one major hurricane (Andrew in 1992) struck Florida between 1966 and 2003. This partly reflected a multi-decade shift in Atlantic currents and wind patterns, but the state also was just lucky; the few storms that did form struck elsewhere or veered harmlessly out to sea. In the cooler period between 1926 and 1965, meanwhile, 14 major hurricanes made landfall in the Sunshine State. So on mathematical probability alone, you'd expect a good many more storms to be hitting Florida in the future.

Commentators have also pointed to the enormous rise in property damage as proof that hurricanes are more severe. But the 25-year quiet period also coincided with massive development and population growth in U.S. coastal areas. More people live in South Florida's Dade and Broward counties now than lived in the entire southeastern United States in 1930. As Florida International University tropical meteorologist Hugh Willoughby told me, "The hurricane damage statistics are driven entirely by economic factors: There's just more stuff sitting around on the beach waiting to be blown or washed away."

But before you dismiss global warming as mere hype and rush out to buy another SUV, consider this: Climate models predict

significant changes in hurricane intensity as greenhouse gases accumulate in the atmosphere and heat the oceans. According to Tom Knutson and Bob Tuleya, tropical climate modelers at the Princeton, N.J.-based Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory, we can expect a 20 percent increase in rainfall, and damage due to increased wind speeds might rise as much as 10 percent. That may not sound like much, but add it to a top-ranked Category 5 monster and you've got a major disaster in the making. A bit like Ivan, in fact. Indeed, the authors conclude that "a greenhouse gas-induced warming may lead to a gradually increasing risk in the occurrence of highly-destructive Category 5 storms."

We meddle with nature's fury at our peril, and strange things are happening to the world's weather these days. In March, the first-ever hurricane formed in the South Atlantic, striking Brazil with 90-mph winds and causing up to a dozen deaths. Meteorologists were bewildered as the familiar swirl of clouds, complete with a well-defined eye, appeared in an oceanic basin where none had been spotted before. The Brazilian weather service, with no established naming sequence, had no idea what to call it, eventually settling on Catarina, after the state where it made landfall. Hurricane monitoring and warning services may now have to be extended 2,000 miles south of the equator. Scientists might have dismissed Catarina as a fluke, except that two other tropical storm-like formations also occurred in the same Southern Hemisphere summer.

The Pacific season has also been active: Japan has suffered its highest number of typhoon strikes on record, and the storms—which hit at the rate of one a week for much of the summer—wreaked havoc in Taiwan, China and the Korean Peninsula. While the link between these events and global warming is disputable, clearer evidence of climate change is flooding in from around the planet. In my journey across the world investigating its impacts for my book, I climbed up to rapidly diminishing glaciers in the Peruvian Andes, suffered blinding dust storms in Inner Mongolia and waded through floodwaters in the drowning Pacific island archipelago of Tuvalu.

Whatever the scientific caveats about this Atlantic hurricane season, climate change remains a global reality—and America is the only country in the world where the political debate still hasn't caught up with this fact. The Bush administration's laggard stance on global warming is frustrating. Indeed, the United States, with only 4 percent of the Earth's population, is responsible for a quarter of global greenhouse gas emissions. Hence the quiet hope expressed by many on this side of the Atlantic that Alex, Charley, Frances and Ivan—and possibly Jeanne—might help open Washington's eyes to the increasingly urgent need to confront climate change.

Lynas, a journalist specializing in climate change, is the author of High Tide: The Truth About Our Climate Crisis (Picador). He lives in Oxford, England.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The Saipan Tribune welcomes contributions by individuals, editorial or legislative, may be held for the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical or abusive, obscene, or defamatory, will not be published. Contributors are asked to be courteous and respectful. The Saipan Tribune reserves the right to publish or not publish any letter or article and to edit or alter any letter or article for clarity and brevity. Letters and articles are not returned. Subscribers may request a refund of their subscription fee if they do not receive the Saipan Tribune for 30 days. Copyright 2004 Saipan Tribune. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without written permission from the publisher.

Decada

Hope springs eternal! Three Filipina house helpers sought my advice on the prospects of a new movement being called “Decada” to go to court and argue that those who have resided in the CNMI since Jan. 9, 1978 be allowed to apply for permanent residency in the United States. They and others are being told that the rationale of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit’s reversal of the District Court judgment on the Sabangan v. Powell have opened the door for this prospect.

The first three sections of the Analysis portion of the Appeal’s opinion reads:

[1] The Fourteenth Amendment, section 1 reads: All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

Section 501(a) of the Covenant reads: To the extent that they are not applicable of their own force, the following provisions of the Constitution of the United States will be applicable within the Northern Mariana Islands as if the Northern Mariana Islands were one of the several States: . . . Amendment 14, Section 1 .

[2] Evidently section 501 of the Covenant makes all of section 1 of the Fourteenth Amendment applicable to the CNMI, which is to be regarded as “one of the several States.” Sabangan and Sohn were therefore born in a jurisdiction at a time in which by force of the Constitution itself they became citizens of the United States.

Several luminaries on island have since declared that this is a flawed misreading of the provisions of the Covenant and the Constitution. Others are applauding what some consider a groundbreaking opinion. The Philippine Consulate General even found it prudent to distance itself from any involvement in either the debate, or any movements arising from the implications of the ruling. Proponents and opponents of this judgment have been vocally exchanging opinions in the printed and broadcast media.

In 1999, the Immanuel United Methodist Church of Saipan opened its former social services program, the Marianas Resource Center, at Oleai. We received a lot of inquiries about the then hot topic of “federalization” and what that meant to the numerous alien workers who had been on island for at least five years.

It had become obvious to me then that the main attraction to traveling to the CNMI as a contract worker was not only the prospect of earning wages of a higher rate than the one at home,

but also the prospect of establishing residency in the CNMI. Even today, in a depressed economy, people come on island as tourists and change status after finding employment. Some have long-term goals. Pregnant women had been known to come in as visitors and manage to stay long enough to deliver their babies who would then be entitled to a U.S. passport. Having babies while on island as a student, or a contract worker, is a frequent occurrence. Illegally crossing into Guam had been known to happen. Being a single male American citizen of any age has become a sought after status, prey to the allure of a certain segment of our transient population.

One might be cynical and say, “All for the vaunted green card and final citizenship to the United States of America.” Not so fast. Inscribed in the Statue of Liberty in the east coast of the United States are these words: “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!” The invitation had been tendered. Why begrudge those who bother to RSVP?

From the perspectives of American Civics, we must thank lawyer Reynaldo Yana and his colleagues for pursuing the Sabangan v. Powell case. After all, the wisdom of the framers of the Constitution left the Supreme Law of the land an open book subject to differing interpretations and amendments. “We the people . . .” reign supreme, certain government officials notwithstanding. The 14th Amendment of 1868 served the interests of forced African immigrants to the U. S. shores. It is only fitting that it should be used by those who either have forsaken a previous status, or, as in the case of the misnomered “stateless” children of the CNMI, seeking a status that they deem is their birthright.

Likewise, we must encourage people like Gregorio Sablan who are pointing out perceived implications of this ruling on the common good, and discussing it openly in the public domain. Nothing makes America work better than people exchanging ideas widely. With a modicum of civility, one hopes.

When I first traveled to the continental United States in the early 60s, I used to characterize my citizenship as a disenfranchised U.S. national traveling with a Philippine passport. Born on the tail end of the Philippine Commonwealth, I certainly felt that I should have been given the option to choose my allegiance. In 1970, at the height of anti-war and civil disobedience movements, I was subjected to undignified search in Seattle for meeting an undesirable student profile. In the 80s, I would be detained by the INS when I came into U.S. territorial jurisdiction carrying my green card and Philippine passport because “it is unusual for a Filipino to qualify for citizenship and not avail of it the first day the opportunity presents itself.” This was particularly true in

leave the work force. What steps should we be taking now to prepare for this?

Kerry: The first thing I will do when I am president is get some advice from Bush’s momma. She’s so old her Social Security number is 1.

Moderator: Mr. Bush.

Bush: Oh yeah, well Kerry’s momma is so old she’s in Jesus’ yearbook.

Moderator: Mr. Kerry, last word.

Kerry: Again, check the record: Bush’s momma’s so old she knew Burger King when he was still a prince.

Moderator: Turning to education, Mr. Bush, why is the United States beginning to lag behind the rest of the world?

Bush: One reason would be my opponent’s momma. She’s so dumb it takes her two hours to watch “60 Minutes.”

Kerry: Unlike your momma, at least she doesn’t sit on the TV and watch the couch.

Moderator: Gentlemen, please. Perhaps we should focus on something less partisan. What can be done to improve the quality of everyday life for average Americans?

Bush: That’s an easy one, get Kerry’s momma a face-lift be-

By **JAIME VERGARA**

Vergara is a Social Studies 6th grade teacher at San Vicente Elementary School and writes a regular column for the Saipan Tribune.



Micronesia where I felt at the time that Filipino citizens were objects of discrimination. Coming into Saipan in 1998, I was told NOT to present myself at the Immigration desk wearing Filipino attire! Anyone who has ever been pulled out of an INS line has heart-wrenching stories to tell.

Still, the world views entry into the United States a premium. In the early 80s, a popular Philippine Statehood Movement recruited and collected membership fees from those who would like to petition the U.S. Congress to make the Philippines the 51st State. That movement is still in existence. It is this same movement that reminds me of Decada.

So, to my three baby-bottom-wiping nannies, as to joining the Decada movement with your \$100 fee, consider it an investment in entertainment, not unlike buying a lottery ticket, or spending an hour at the casino. I do not think that your prospects of getting what you want in the immediate term even come close to the prospects of winning the Red Cross Club 200 jackpot offering. (Which makes me think that if you are the wagering type, add another hundred and buy the Red Cross ticket instead!) If you cannot afford the money, watch the show from the sideline. Most likely, if a suit is ever formulated, it would be a class action suit, which would benefit all those of similar situation to that of the plaintiff in the case.

In a time when community and national leaders are decrying the erosion of an ethic of personal responsibility, it is heartening to witness an awakening of civic consciousness and responsibility when grassroots issues and matters of constitutional rights are raised. The two centuries of experiment in constitutional democracy in the United States rests in the understanding that the “We the people” process is a continuing exercise in self-definition. There is irreplaceable value in the ongoing struggles and debates that shape our national identity. Dedication to freedom and equality should rarely be a rationale for war, but always a foundation for peace. The tradition of vocal assertion of personal conviction, protest and social activism must be championed. One must applaud those who engage in the tedious task of pursuing constitutional due process, whether it be through legislative action, executive decree, or judicial review.

So’s your momma

If the discourse surrounding the presidential election continues to decline at its present rate, here is how the final Bush-Kerry debate will go:

Moderator: Mr. Bush, one of the most critical and costly health problems facing this country is obesity, what role can the federal government play?

Bush: One thing the government can do is put Kerry’s momma on a diet. Kerry’s momma’s so fat she has to iron her pants in the driveway. She’s so fat that when her beeper goes off, people think she is backing up.

Moderator: Mr. Kerry, your response.

Kerry: It seems to me that my opponent should be the last one to bad-mouth mommas, because his is so fat that when she lays on the beach people run around yelling “Free Willy.” In fact, she’s so fat that when she steps on a scale, it reads “One at a time, please.”

Moderator: Mr. Bush, you have the last word on this topic.

Bush: All I can say is look at the record: Kerry’s momma is so fat she got baptized at Sea World.

Moderator: Mr. Kerry, in the coming years Social Security is going to come under enormous pressure as the baby boomers

By **JIM SHEA**

The Hartford Courant

Shea is a columnist for The Courant.



cause right now she’s so ugly she makes onions cry.

Kerry: This coming from a man whose momma’s so ugly that when she walks into a bank, they turn off the surveillance cameras.

Moderator (sigh): Final remarks, Mr. Bush.

Bush: Thank you. I’d like to take this opportunity to ask voters to think about one thing when they walk into the voting booth: Can I support a man whose momma’s house is so dusty the cockroaches drive around in dune buggies.

Mr. Kerry: In closing, let me just say that Bush’s momma got a glass eye with a fish in it.

Moderator: Thank you gentlemen, and good night.

MAKING

From Page 11

Letters to the Editor

In search of the truth

To Mr. Peter Perez’s “challenge,” my response is: Step out of cyberspace Mr. Perez, and post your physical address or that of Pagan Watch’s corporate legal counsel in the newspaper or notify us directly, so that we may provide you with documents that leave no room for interpretation. You’ll then be free to present your lies in a new forum, a court of law. We’ll start with those regarding strip-mining and work our way down from there. Or, if you wish to put aside this destructive bickering and demonstrate that you truly care about the CNMI and the people who live and raise their families there, praying for a brighter and independent economic future, join me at the Micronesia business conference

in Los Angeles next week and make your plan for the development of Pagan Island available for all to see. Most importantly, bring your calculator. Let me show you the real cost of developing a global business from a remote tropical island. If you or your friend Bryan Burke need helping getting to L.A. from San Francisco and Dallas, don’t hesitate to contact Mr. Jeffrey Finley at 602-955-0055 or mail your request to my attention at 4425 North 24th Street, Suite 250, Phoenix, Arizona 85016. I’ll be happy to provide airline and proper hotel accommodations.

Kenneth James Moore
Azmar International

Are wheelchairs for everyone?

As a health care provider here in the CNMI, I would like to inform the Wheelchair Foundation that Healthcare Specialties/Saipan has been doing business here since 1996, renting, and selling wheelchairs and other various type of Home Medical Equipment to the community.

You stated in the newspaper that one of the reasons why the foundation is giving out free wheelchairs is due to the shortage here on island and the cost. Healthcare Specialties does issue wheelchairs to beneficiaries of Medicare, HPMR members, Medicaid patients and Vocational Rehabilitation clients when there is an order from the doctor.

We do not give out wheelchairs just to anyone who asks for it without a doctor’s prescription. We have encountered a few cases when the doctor does not want their patient to be dependent

on a wheelchair and would rather that they use a walker to walk around as long as they are able to encourage ambulation.

At Healthcare Specialties, we commend the foundation’s generosity for giving out wheelchairs to the needy. However, we would also like to inform the foundation that we do exist and is providing services on the island, and that Medicare beneficiaries, HPMR, Medicaid, OVR, etc., can obtain medical equipment for home use such as wheelchair, oxygen, hospital bed, diabetic shoes, etc., if their doctor prescribe it as deemed medically necessary.

Rose Deleon Guerrero
Patient Service Coordinator
Healthcare Specialties/Saipan

The ethics of BOE

I’m sure everyone is aware of me being sanctioned but not everyone is aware of the motives. Surely, BOE had a reason to be upset with me, but I do not have the rights of “freedom of expression and the freedom of speech.” The ethics code of BOE clearly states that “board members should work cooperatively” and “all BOE members should be forthright in stating their opinions.” Even though the BOE may have disliked what I wrote at anytime, the act of sanctioning me for being “forthright” as stated in the ethics code and for exercising my rights of free speech and expression emphatically identifies a greater miscarriage of justice by BOE. I did not like writing about the board and its members. I am a member of the board and I certainly didn’t get any pleasure from it because my writing was driven out of frustration from getting no responses to my inquiries since January of this year.

The argument that I need to earn respect for people to “do the right thing” is hogwash. I am a “doer” who wants to get things accomplished. Everything that I wrote to and about BOE had already been raised in a letter or conversation with BOE but I never got a single response so went to the media. So the ethical question is raised: Who is really wrong, me for speaking my opinion in a forthright tone or BOE for ignoring the dozens of “formal” request and letters that I have sent? I would never have written anything if BOE had tried just a little to respond to my written requests in a “forthright” manner. The Governor wouldn’t do BOE’s dirty work for them so they stooped to plan B (sanction).

I was accused of being a coward and not speaking in the BOE meetings. But why should I even bother to speak in a BOE meeting when I’m left out of the loop and the voting members have already made up their minds in committee? Plus the fact that I have already addressed the issues of concern to teachers in a letter or verbally to the BOE chair? For example, the PRAXIS is-

sue: I asked at the beginning of the year to be informed of all committee meetings with an agenda that directly or indirectly affected teachers so that I could attend. The committee met on PRAXIS and kept it a secret from me. The BOE chair even claimed that he would recall the policy but didn’t, so what could I do but come in the news so teachers could not say I was not doing my job? The ad hoc committee is another example because the committee was created to address the concerns of teachers over six months ago. But they have never met. Worse, I am not a member of that committee. Yes, you’ve read it right; the BOE Teacher Rep is not allowed to be a member nor attend the committee meetings to address teachers’ concerns. But that’s not all—the ad hoc committee is now scheduled to meet for the first time but the only order of business is to create some policies to “tie the BOE Teacher Rep’s hands.” So who is really violating the ethics code of BOE?

I totally understand BOE’s frustration but BOE doesn’t seem to even care about my frustration and concerns. The sanctioning didn’t hurt me and it’s a joke because I didn’t have any real power to sanction. I just pushed the envelope, which is the bottom line behind the discontent of BOE. I was only sad to learn in the meeting that a teacher was sending all of the school representatives’ e-mails to BOE members. BOE knew everything and that the school reps are getting stronger, so “cut off the head with sanctions and hope the body will die” is their goal now.

But the good part is the game is still afoot and it’s a long way from being over and teachers have the law on their side, so guess who will win in the end. The Governor has already said I have three more years to try and improve things for teachers and the entire system. All teachers, one direction.

Ambrose M. Bennett
BOE Teacher Rep.

Taking stock of supremacy of laws

We fiddle around with federal authority on the issuance of student visas solely the purview of U.S. Immigration. We do so as to ignore the supremacy of laws on this and other issues.

The supremacy of laws comes in descending order: federal, state and territories. A glimpse into pertinent Covenant provision says where local law conflict with federal law, the latter prevails. It’s mind-boggling how we have attempted to usurp such federal authority.

If you recall, last year more than 20,000 foreign students were denied visas to colleges and universities across the country. It demonstrates that only U.S. Immigration can issue such visa. The NMI must steer clear of its tendency to assume what’s rightfully the purview of the federal government.

Regarding statelessness, lest we forget this archipelago is now Americana! That we may have failed to take heed of changes in paradigms since 1978 doesn’t grant any of us the adolescent authority to deny our friends their rights to pursue their dreams. If it means challenging the short-

sightedness of the Covenant Agreement, then let it be.

With magnanimity, local and federal authorities must descend on this issue with the view to resolving the frustrating dilemma of our friends. While we had to endure a waiting period up to 1986, none of us was denied employment and other benefits then. They had to endure such frustration in the long journey to attaining justice.

I notice too that many who are caught this unintended situation are young and promising people. Resolving their status would set them up for skills acquisition so they eventually become productive members of this community.

The NMI needs as many educated and skilled people in its work force to fulfill its commitment to fostering a partnership with friends from near and far in making these islands a better place for one and all. Si yuus maase.

John S. DelRosario, Jr.
Koblerville

VERIZON

cmyk

Nation

Ivan, remnants blamed for 46 US deaths

By LAWRENCE MESSINA
AP WRITER

WHEELING, W.Va. (AP)—Remnants of Hurricane Ivan made a violent mark across the Southeast and the Appalachians, where several people were killed by falling trees and floods that washed away scores of roads. Search teams were sent to scour damaged areas for stranded residents.

Ivan and its remnants had been blamed for 46 deaths in the United States, 16 of them in Florida. The storm also was blamed for 70 deaths in the Caribbean.

On Saturday, President Bush declared disaster areas in Georgia and North Carolina, where the storm caused heavy flooding in some areas and a total of at least 12 deaths. Bush previously declared disasters in Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana and Florida, freeing up federal money for temporary housing and home repairs, low-cost loans and other programs.

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MIAMI (AP)—Hurricane Karl formed in the central Atlantic on Saturday but posed no immediate threat to land, forecasters said.

Karl, the seventh hurricane this season, had top sustained winds near 115 mph and was expected to get stronger Sunday, according to the National Hurricane Center in Miami.

At 11 p.m. EDT, Karl was centered about 1,150 miles west of the Cape Verde islands—still closer to Africa than the Caribbean—and was moving west-northwest near 12 mph.

Karl comes on the heels of Tropical Storm Jeanne, which was nearing the southeastern Bahamas, and could gain strength.

Karl was the 11th named storm of the Atlantic hurricane season, which runs from June 1 to Nov. 30.

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One storm-related death occurred off the Connecticut coast, where a 31-foot trimaran taking part in a race capsized near Niantic Bay in 6-foot seas and winds of 50 knots. The Day of New London reported.

A passing fisherman picked up both of the Stonington men who had been aboard the boat. Peter Harvey survived but Chris Conradi was pronounced dead at a New London hospital. The two-day race from New London to Greenport, N.Y., was canceled.

Utility companies said more than 1.1 million homes and businesses still had no electricity Saturday from Florida north to Pennsylvania.

In Wheeling, Doug Patterson spent part of Saturday shoveling a wall of sand along the outside of the bank where his

wife works, one of a small army of people working to protect businesses from the rising Ohio River, swollen by the remnants of Hurricane Ivan.

Across the street, water covered the city's riverfront park and amphitheater so deeply that only the very tips of light poles and trees marked its location.

"The whole place is pretty messed up, to be honest with you," said Patterson, 43.

As the broad area of rain that remained from Ivan streamed off through New England on the way to the North Atlantic, the National Weather Service predicted the Ohio River would crest Sunday at 46 feet, about 10 feet above flood stage and close to its record.

By early afternoon Saturday, it was already at 41.7 feet, the National Weather Service said. The river had submerged the northern tip and southern half of the city's Wheeling Island, which holds residential neighborhoods and Wheeling Island Racetrack and Gaming.

"We've been plucking people out of here left and right," firefighter David Schaffer said. "People are waiting until the last minute, and then they see the water come up and they get panicked."

Downriver, residents were urged to evacuate parts of Moundsville, and big flood gates were closed at Parkersburg, where the river was expected to crest Sunday at five feet above flood stage.

All around West Virginia, flooding and mudslides had blocked 207 roads and damaged hundreds of houses, authorities said.

Upriver in western Pennsylvania, downtown Pittsburgh's Point State Park was underwater Saturday where the Monongahela and Allegheny rivers join to form the Ohio. Dozens of boats that had broken free of their moorings were floating down the fast-rushing rivers.

Elsewhere, streams had started to recede in hard-hit western North Carolina as others rose in New York.

Parts of northern New Jersey and eastern New York measured 5 inches of rain Saturday. A mobile home park had to be evacuated because of flooding in Ravena, N.Y., 13 miles south of Albany.

Williamsport, Pa., collected 6.5 inches of rain in 24 hours and Pittsburgh got a record 5.95 inches Friday.

Across the Ohio River from West Virginia, Ivan also had caused flooding in eastern Ohio. About 1,500 residents of Belmont County were out of their homes on Saturday, and some 2,700 were told to boil their tap water because of line breaks, said Rob Glenn, a spokeswoman for the Ohio Emergency Management Agency.



James Abney, left, hugs his sister Jinnie Batts at the site of his home which was destroyed by a tornado associated with Hurricane Ivan, in Marianna, Fla., Saturday, Sept. 18, 2004. AP

Hurricane victims in Florida try to rebuild

PENSACOLA, Fla. (AP)—Three days after Ivan cut a path of destruction across the Gulf Coast, thousands were struggling with how to move on.

There are the tangible losses: No water for showers. No power for cooking. No gas to get around.

And there is something far less visible but just as palpable: The uncertainty of what comes next and how to begin starting over.

Jim Hegman's entire fortune and future were tied up in his home: A 37-foot sailboat he restored with his own hands and lived in off the shores of Pensacola.

If a man's house is his castle, Hegman's Tayana 37 was a floating palace—its gleaming teakwood deck sanded and shined, a kitchen cabinet he built over the sink below, a tower he constructed for the

radar and wind generator.

Where other men carry photos of wives and kids in their wallets, Hegman displays one of his boat. "It used to be a beautiful thing," he said, standing before the ruins of his home, left with only a pickup truck bed to sleep in and a few diesel-soaked tokens of the past.

"What do you move on to?" the 50-year-old sailor asked.

After Ivan roared ashore along the Gulf Coast early Thursday with 130 mph wind, tornadoes and towering waves, it cut a path of destruction across the South and Northeast that left 46 people dead, 16 of them in Florida. Earlier, it was blamed for 70 deaths in the Caribbean.

Hundreds of urban search and rescue workers scoured demolished neighborhoods, some using tracking dogs to look for victims in the rubble and along

flooded river banks. In Escambia Bay, where a trucker was killed when a bridge collapsed, the Army Corps of Engineers was asked to use sonar to search for possible additional victims.

Twelve people were still missing Saturday in Escambia County and at least a dozen in Santa Rosa County, but it was unclear whether they were in danger or had simply evacuated without notifying relatives, said Sonya Smith, spokeswoman for the county emergency operations center.

More than a million people were without power across 13 states, including more than 340,000 homes and businesses in Florida, state officials said Saturday.

The business of rebuilding was under way in earnest on Saturday. Road crews worked furiously to bulldoze debris to the side of byways in Florida,

while several major thoroughfares—including a buckled interstate bridge—stayed closed to travelers. Other streets remained an obstacle course of tree limbs and power lines.

Utility workers managed to restore a major generating plant and some 150 miles of transmission lines, but "there is still an unbelievable amount of hot, hard and dangerous work ahead," Gulf Power spokesman John Hutchinson said.

Even before sunup, thousands lined up at a Pensacola shopping center where Florida National Guard members distributed meals-ready-to-eat, water and ice from semi-trucks. Cars stretched for miles on one side of the parking lot. On the other, hundreds of people—including pregnant women and young kids—waited on foot for supplies.

Earthquake swarm shakes eastern Sierra

MAMMOTH LAKES, Calif. (AP)—A swarm of earthquakes—one a magnitude-5.5—jolted a remote, sparsely populated area along the eastern Sierra Nevada on Saturday, authorities said.

A Mono County sheriff's dispatcher said there were no immediate reports of any injuries or damage from the temblors centered along the California-Nevada line about 30 miles northeast of Mammoth Lakes.

David Oppenheimer, a seismologist for the U.S. Geological Survey in Menlo Park, said most

of the 70 quakes in the sequence that began 12:02 a.m. Saturday were magnitude-2 or less.

The magnitude-5.5 temblor that struck at 4:02 p.m. was followed by a magnitude-5.4 quake at 4:43 p.m., he said. The moderate quakes were the biggest in the swarm and the biggest on the fault in more than a decade.

"It's been quite a robust sequence," Oppenheimer said. "It's not clear how it'll play out. There could be more magnitude-5s or it could die off in an hour or two."

Some of the quakes were felt 35 miles away in Hawthorne, Nev.

"They (quakes) just felt like a hit and a rolling sensation," said Mineral County sheriff's dispatcher Lorraine Haight. "Of course, it's scary when you don't expect it."

Dennis Bauer of Lake Forest, Calif., was inside a small Mono Lake information center near Lee Vining when one of the temblors shook.

"It was like someone was leaning on the building and pushing

it back and forth," he said.

The eastern Sierra has been a seismically active area. A similar sequence was centered in the same area over a one-week period in 1980, Oppenheimer said. The activity died down in 1984 before picking up again in 1992.

"For whatever reasons this fault seems to make a lot of noise," Oppenheimer said. "It pops off every once in a while."

The Great Basin that covers most of Nevada and Utah is pulling part, causing the quakes, he said.

Louisiana voters approve gay-marriage ban

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—Louisiana voters overwhelmingly approved a state constitutional amendment Saturday banning same-sex marriages and civil unions, one of up to 12 such measures on the ballot around the country this year.

With 99 percent of precincts reporting, the amendment was winning approval with 78 percent of the vote, and support for it was evident statewide. Only in New Orleans, home to a politically strong gay community, was the race relatively close, and even there the amendment was winning passage. Turnout statewide appeared to be about 27 percent of Louisiana’s 2.8 million voters, somewhat low for a state election.

Christian conservatives had conducted an intense grassroots lobbying campaign for the amendment, which had been expected to pass easily. The civil rights group Forum for Equality had already promised legal action against it.

“It’s gratifying to see the people of Louisiana had an opportunity, as distinguished from judges, having the final say on the issue of whether traditional marriage will continue to be the fundamental institution in our state,” said

Darrell White, a retired state judge and consultant for Louisiana Family Forum, which pushed for the amendment.

John Rawls, a lawyer for Forum for Equality, reiterated the group’s contention that the amendment does far more than stop gay marriage and that it could affect many private contracts between unmarried couples, gay or straight—a claim its supporters dispute.

“I am disappointed that so many Louisianians either did not read the amendment or are so afraid of gays that they voted for this amendment anyway,” Rawls said.

Louisiana already has a law stating that marriage can be only between a man and woman, but supporters of the amendment want to protect that law in the Constitution. The amendment also would prohibit state officials and courts from recognizing out-of-state marriages and civil unions between homosexuals.

Rawls said there were many possible grounds for challenging the results in state and federal court. One appeared Saturday, when voting machines were delivered late to some New Orleans precincts, keeping some from casting ballots for hours.

Kin of Iraq hostage await word on fate

HILLSDALE, Mich. (AP)—Relatives of a man being held hostage in Iraq waited for word about him Saturday as militants threatened to decapitate him, another American and a Briton unless demands were met within 48 hours.

“This has been a big shock,” Frank Armstrong said in a telephone interview. He said his brother, Eugene Armstrong, grew up in this south central Michigan community.

Frank Armstrong said the FBI notified him of the abduction this week, but declined to discuss details. The State Department said U.S. officials were working closely with Iraqi authorities to secure the release of the hostages.

The threat against the hostages came in a video purportedly from a militant group linked to al-Qaida that showed Eugene Armstrong, fellow American Jack Hensley and Briton Kenneth Bigley, the first word of their fate since the three construction workers were abducted from their Baghdad office two days ago.

Hensley’s relatives could not be reached for comment by The Associated Press.

Bigley’s family urged his captors to free him on Friday. The 62-year-old Briton is married with one child.

“It’s hard to understand why Ken would be targeted in this way, but we would appeal to those who have taken him to please return him safely to us,” the family said in a statement.

Minnta Davis, a cousin of Eugene Armstrong, said his work in construction took him around the world and he had been living in Thailand with his wife before traveling to Iraq. Davis said she recognized him in the video, which was rebroadcast on U.S. television.

“We only know what they’re showing on television,” Davis said. “We don’t really know anything. It’s kind of hard to say what you don’t know. We just know there are just a lot of prayers for him.”

Davis said Eugene Armstrong moved from the Hillsdale area around 1990. Hillsdale, a city of about 8,200 near the state’s border with Indiana and Ohio, is about 100 miles southwest of Detroit.

In the hostage video, posted on a Web site known for its Islamic militant content, kidnappers purporting to belong to Tawhid and Jihad—a group led by Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi—demanded that Iraqi women detained at two American-controlled prisons here are freed within 48 hours or the captives will be beheaded. A U.S. military official said two women are in U.S. custody.

If their demand is not met, the speaker warned, “by the name of God, these three hostages will get nothing from us except their throats slit and necks chopped, so they will serve as an example.”

Schwarzenegger vetoes minimum wage bill

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)—Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger vetoed bills Saturday that would have raised the minimum wage to \$7.75 an hour, made Wal-Mart-like megastores more difficult to build and limited schools’ ability to give students random drug tests.

The Republican governor contended the minimum wage and megastore legislation would have hurt the state’s economy and said drug-testing policies should be left up to school officials.

The minimum wage bill would have raised California’s minimum wage from \$6.75 to \$7.25 Jan. 1 and to \$7.75 on Jan. 1, 2006. The federal minimum wage is \$5.15 an hour.

Bill supporters said the minimum wage hasn’t kept up with inflation, but Schwarzenegger said the legislation would have discouraged economic growth.

“Now is not the time to create barriers to our economic recovery or reverse the momentum we have generated,” he said in a veto message. “I want to create more jobs and make every California job more secure.”

The megastore bill would have required cities and counties to complete economic impact reports before ruling on proposals to build retail stores with more than 130,000 square feet and that devote more than 10 percent of their space to selling food. The reports would have included assessments of the stores’ impact on other businesses, wages, public services and traffic.

Supporters, including the California Independent Grocers Association and several labor unions, said such stores can drive out other businesses and result in lower wages, more part-time jobs and traffic congestion. Opponents included the state Chamber of Commerce, Costco, Wal-Mart and the League of California Cities.

Schwarzenegger said the bill would have imposed “unnecessary, burdensome restrictions on businesses attempting to expand in California.”

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Asia

Foreigners 'seen' with extremists in south RP

By TERESA CEROJANO
AP WRITER

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The military is investigating reports that foreigners brandishing heavy weapons were seen traveling with Muslim extremists in a remote town in the southern Philippines, an official said Friday.

Col. Jerry Jalandoni, commander of

the army's 604th Infantry Brigade, said villagers reported earlier this week they had seen several Middle Eastern-looking men lugging high-powered machine guns and luggage on their backs in the company of Abu Sayyaf guerrillas.

"The locals described them as tall, moustached, wearing heavy beards and could not speak the local dialect," Jalandoni told The Associated Press.

He said the men were with more than 40 mostly Abu Sayyaf rebels who had dinner and stayed overnight on Monday in the house of a village leader in mountainous Bagumbayan town's Bai Sarifinang village.

The group is reportedly led by Isnilon Hapilon, a top Abu Sayyaf leader wanted by Washington in connection with the abduction and kill-

ing of U.S. hostages, Jalandoni said.

The next day, Jalandoni said, the village leader reported the presence of the armed men to the military, but troops failed to catch up with the group because heavy rain and fog grounded military helicopters. The group was apparently headed toward nearby South Cotabato province.

"Our pursuit continues, and maybe if we kill someone among them, that's

the time we could find out if they are really foreigners," Jalandoni said.

The military has previously reported the presence of Middle Eastern-looking men suspected to be al-Qaida militants posing as missionaries in the southern Philippines.

Authorities have arrested dozens of Middle Eastern men in the south in past years on suspicion they were terrorists.

Suspected Taliban kill pro-election elders

By STEPHEN GRAHAM
AP WRITER

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—Suspected Taliban rebels killed two tribal elders who were encouraging participation in elections and shot to death an Afghan military commander in an ambush, officials said Saturday.

Meanwhile, the U.S. military apologized for the latest civilian casualty of its operations to protect landmark October elections. Also, Afghanistan's top law-enforcer said three men arrested for firing a rocket at an American helicopter carrying President Hamid Karzai on a campaign trip had confessed to being members of the Taliban.

Afghan security forces searching for three elders kidnapped from Maruf district of southern Kandahar province found their bodies lying in a stream bed late Friday, district mayor Sayed Ali said.

All had multiple gunshot wounds and two were dead. A third was still alive despite injuries to the throat and stomach and had been taken to the U.S. military base in Kandahar city for treatment, Ali said.

Ali said the men, who were abducted a week ago, were targeted because "they had been telling people to get registered for the election and to go and vote for whoever they choose."

Members of the former ruling Taliban leading a stubborn insurgency across the south and east of Afghanistan have vowed to disrupt the country's first-ever direct presidential election on Oct. 9.

Ten election workers have already died this year in a series of bombings and shootings, and two elders were reported killed last week in Zabul province, next to Kandahar, also because they were encouraging Afghans to vote.

The violence has also left scores of Afghan security forces dead.

On Saturday, four gunmen riding two motorcycles ambushed the car of a militia commander in Helmand province, killing him and wounding two of his guards, said Haji Mohammed Wali, a spokesman for the governor.

He blamed the Taliban for the deadly attack on the commander, Samad Khan.

The U.S. military has vowed



Afghan women refugees living in Peshawar, Pakistan listen to staff of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) regarding voting procedure for the upcoming presidential elections of Afghanistan on Wednesday, Sept. 15, 2004.

Taliban suspected in failed Karzai attack

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—A failed rocket attack on a U.S. helicopter carrying President Hamid Karzai was carried out by a self-confessed Taliban commando, Afghanistan's top law-enforcer said Saturday.

Three suspects were arrested within hours of Thursday's attack, which saw the American military whisk Karzai away from a southeastern city where he was to open a school.

"They are local people from that village where we arrested them," Interior Minister Ali Ahmad Jalali said. "They are members of the Taliban. They said they are Taliban."

The helicopter carrying Karzai was about to touch down near Gardez, about 60 miles south of the capital, when the rocket was fired.

The U.S. military says the projectile hit just 300 yards away, though it remains unclear how close it came to the aircraft, which pulled away and returned Karzai safely to Kabul.

Jalali said the rocket, which hit the door of a house, injuring no one, was fired from an area six miles away.

Police followed footprints and then motorcycle tracks to a house in a village called Khatawa, where they found three men hiding in a small back room.

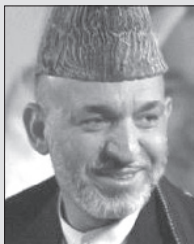
Two of them had confessed to carrying out the attack, Jalali said.

Members of the former ruling Taliban leading a stubborn insurgency across the south and east of Afghanistan have vowed to disrupt its first-ever direct presidential election on Oct. 9.

The school opening was not officially part of his campaign, but Karzai complained later that over-zealous security was preventing from talking to ordinary Afghans ahead of the vote.

Shootings and bombings have already killed ten people helping organize the ballot, in which Karzai is widely expected to triumph, and officials warn of more to come.

Most devastating was last month's suicide car bombing which killed about 10 people outside the Kabul office of the U.S. security firm which provides Karzai's heavily armed bodyguards.



Karzai

to use its 18,000-strong force to bolster security during the vote, and officials say U.S. forces have killed more than 100 militants since May in operations across the south and east of the country.

But it suffered a setback Saturday, apologizing for the death of a male juvenile and the wounding of another in an incident in Uruzgan province.

Spokesman Maj. Scott Nelson said the military "deeply

regrets and apologizes for" the casualties.

Nelson said the incident occurred on Friday "in conjunction with an engagement" between militants and U.S.-led troops, and that two were hurt when they "failed to halt after repeated warnings." No further details were available.

Last month, the military apologized for the deaths of three unarmed Afghans shot dead

after their pickup truck failed to stop at a checkpoint in Ghazni province. It is still investigating whether civilians died when U.S. warplanes bombed suspected militants on Aug. 30 in eastern Kunar province.

Dozens of civilians have also perished in attacks blamed on anti-government militants, including nine children who died in the Aug. 28 bombing of a school in Paktia province.

RP govt to sack appointees who don't agree to pay cuts

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Presidential appointees in state enterprises were warned Saturday they will be fired if they do not agree to pay cuts as part of an austerity program aimed at reducing the government's huge deficit.

"A compliance scorecard on pay cuts and austerity measures" will be used as "a tool for deciding who among the Presidential appointees would stay or leave," said Ignacio Bunye, a spokesman for President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

On Friday, Arroyo praised some officers of government corporations who have voluntarily accepted pay cuts. Others who resist austerity measures would be dismissed on grounds of insubordination, she said.

She said "there will be no sacred cows" in the austerity campaign.

Faced with an ailing econo-

my, Arroyo ordered a ban two weeks ago on the purchase of government cars, penalties for unofficial use of vehicles and other austerity measures to reduce the country's oil imports by about 12 percent and save US\$784 million (euro 646 million) a year.

The Philippine economy has been struggling with a debt of 3.36 trillion pesos (US\$60 billion; euro 48 billion) and the deficit forecast stands at about 200 billion pesos (US\$3.5 billion; euro 2.8 billion) this year, mainly because of falling revenues and poor tax collection efforts.

The country also faces a looming power crisis, with an Asian Development Bank study noting that the Philippines needs to build 6,000 megawatts of additional power generation capacity over the next 10 years to avoid a repeat of power shortages endemic in the early 1990s.

Myanmar junta removes four ministers

YANGON, Myanmar (AP)—Myanmar's military junta on Saturday dismissed four ministers in a Cabinet shuffle that included the exit of the foreign minister who was the most visible face and defender of the secretive ruling leadership.

As foreign minister, Win Aung also bore the brunt of Western anger and Asian colleagues' frustrations at international meetings over his government's refusal to free pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi, currently under house arrest.

The junta seized power 16 years ago Saturday after crushing a pro-democracy movement that saw Suu Kyi rise to prominence.

In the shakeup, Win Aung and Deputy Foreign Minister Khin Maung Win were "permitted to retire," said an announcement on state radio and television. The phrase is a government euphemism for dismissing officials.

Also "permitted to retire" were Agriculture Minister Maj.-Gen. Nyunt Tin and

Transport Minister Maj.-Gen. Hla Myint Swe. No reasons were given for the dismissals.

The junta seized power 16 years ago Saturday after crushing a pro-democracy movement that saw Suu Kyi rise to prominence.

Saturday's announcement said Win Aung was replaced by Maj. Gen. Nyan Win and Khin Maung Win by Col. Maung Myint.

Win Aung's dismissal came two weeks before he was expected to attend the Oct. 8-9 Asia-Europe Meeting, or ASEM, in Hanoi, Vietnam.

An Asian diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Win A was dismissed because had lost credibility because none of his promises came true, such as the numerous promises dignitaries that Suu Kyi would be released soon.

The EU has given Myanmar until Oct. 8 to release Suu Kyi or face further sanctions. It has already imposed a travel ban on Myanmar's military leaders, and frozen their financial assets in Europe.

Four arrested in Indonesia embassy bombing

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Police announced the arrests Saturday of four suspects in a Sept. 9 suicide bombing at the Australian Embassy, the first breakthrough in the case.

The four men were detained under anti-terrorist laws but have not been charged in the attack, which killed nine people and wounded nearly 180.

Police chief Gen. Dai Bachtiar said he was "convinced" police

would capture the alleged masterminds, Malaysian militants Azahari bin Husin and Noordin Mohamed Top.

"The more arrests we make, the more information we get," Bachtiar said.

Police were questioning nine other people, among dozens detained in connection with the attack. Most have been released.

The arrests Saturday were the first in the case.

The bombing has been blamed on Jemaah Islamiyah, a militant network affiliated with al-Qaida that was also implicated in the 2002 Bali bombings and an attack last year on the J.W. Marriott Hotel in Jakarta.

One of the four suspects, identified by his initials A.A.H., has confessed to transporting explosives used in the embassy blast to Jakarta from a safe house in western Java, Bachtiar said.

He was picked up after the bombing, Bachtiar said.

The other three were detained before the attack happened, but police have since determined that they were linked to it, he said.

In a related development on Saturday, the jailed cleric accused of heading Jemaah Islamiyah condemned the embassy attack, and reiterated that he had nothing to do with it.

"I personally condemn the

bombing (and) I am deeply sorry and express my condolences to the victims," Abu Bakar Bashir said, according to his lawyer Wirawan Adnan, who visited the cleric in his cell in Cipinang Prison.

Abu Bakar Bashir has been in jail since 2002, when he was convicted for minor immigration infractions. Prosecutors say they now plan to charge him with heading Jemaah Islamiyah,

and for the Marriott bombing last year that killed 12.

Bashir has denied any involvement in terrorism and claims that Jakarta buckled under pressure from Washington to arrest him as part of a crackdown on Islamic activists in the world's most populous Muslim nation.

"I deny all accusations that connect the bombing with me," Bashir said. "Terrorists must be punished and eliminated for good."

ASIAN Briefs

Caterpillar attack on India rice crop threatens famine

GAUHATI, India (AP)—A plague of caterpillars is threatening famine in northeastern India as fears grow that the insects could devour a state's entire rice crop, an official said Saturday.

India's Mizoram state has a long history of famine coinciding with caterpillar and rodent infestations, and efforts are being launched to control the pests, said Panjak Bhattacharjee, a senior agriculture official from the state capital Aizawl.

"It's an alarming situation. Caterpillars are eating up the rice plants and destroying the crop in the entire state," said Bhattacharjee.

India is soliciting the help of experts from Vietnam, China and Australia to control the hordes of caterpillars that are gobbling up the rice fields.

The caterpillar menace began in August and has reminded tribal elders of famines that occur every 18 to 30 years in Mizoram, which borders Myanmar and Bangladesh.

35 Guantanamo inmates return to Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—Thirty-five Pakistani prisoners released from U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba returned home Saturday, a senior interior ministry official said.

Pakistani authorities detained the men for questioning after they arrived at a Pakistani air base near the capital Islamabad, said Brig. Javed Iqbal Cheema, director-general of the National Crisis Management Cell at the Interior Ministry.

He said the men will be freed and allowed to go home after the interrogations were completed.

The Department of Defense said the 35 Pakistanis were among 191 prisoners to be released from Guantanamo Bay.

Cheema was the head of a Pakistani delegation that

went to Washington in May to secure the release of their citizens detained at Guantanamo Bay.

US apologizes for young Afghan's death

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—The U.S. military apologized Saturday for the death of a young Afghan civilian near to where American-led troops were battling militants in a Taliban stronghold of southern Afghanistan.

One male juvenile was killed and another wounded Friday in Uruzgan province, spokesman Maj. Scott Nelson said. "The coalition deeply regrets and apologizes for" the casualties, he said.

Nelson said the incident occurred "in conjunction with an engagement" between militants and U.S.-led troops, and that two were hurt when they "failed to halt after repeated warnings."

He said the military was investigating and that no further details were immediately available, including whether the victims were shot.

China marks anniversary of Japan invasion

BEIJING (AP)—China allowed a brief protest outside the Japanese Embassy and sounded sirens in dozens of cities Saturday to mark the anniversary of Japan's 1931 invasion amid official unease at Tokyo's new diplomatic and military ambitions.

The official commemorations were the biggest to date and come at a time of rising anti-Japanese sentiment, stoked by a communist government that regards Japan as its rival for regional superpower status.

In Beijing, police let 20 protesters gather outside the Japanese Embassy. The demonstrators held banners opposing Tokyo's bid for a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council and its claim to a disputed island chain.

"The Chinese people who have fully suffered the wounds of Japanese militarism must strain every nerve to be vigilant!" one protester, Zhang Jianyong, said through a loudspeaker.

South Korea says it won't develop nukes



ELTON DOES SHANGHAI

British rock legend Elton John holds a Chinese traditional clothing as gift from local organizers after a press conference Saturday Sept. 18, 2004 in Shanghai, China. Elton John will perform two concerts on Sept. 19 and 21 as his first concerts in mainland China.

Pakistan: Rebel may be hiding near border

WANA, Pakistan (AP)—A top Uzbek rebel leader wanted by authorities in his home country might be hiding in the tense tribal region that forms the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan, a senior Pakistani general said Saturday.

Tahir Yuldash, political leader of the rebel Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, was wounded in March when the army raided a suspected al-Qaida hide-out on the outskirts of Wana, the main town in South Waziristan, said Army Maj. Gen. Niaz Khattak.

But Yuldash managed to escape along with hundreds of other militants.

"Yes, Tahir Yuldash might be hiding here, and we have some information about it," Khattak, who is responsible for military operations in the North and South Waziristan tribal regions, told reporters in Wana.

Khattak also said the army had no information about the where-

abouts of Al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden or his deputy, Ayman al-Zawahiri, who are thought to be taking refuge in the region.

During the March operation, the army said it killed 63 militants and arrested 163 foreign and local suspects. The majority of the tribesmen were released after promising to stay away from foreign militants.

At the time, Uzbekistan had requested "detailed information" about Uzbeks who were captured or killed.

Khattak said "about 600 to 700 foreign militants are still hiding or on the run" in the country's tribal regions. "We are chasing them, we will kill or capture them," he said.

Khattak also showed the passport of a Jordanian terror suspect, Abdullah al-Haj. The passport, he said, was among items seized after the June 11 raid at the home of a local tribesman, Eda Khan.

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea insisted Saturday it will never develop nuclear weapons, but North Korea ruled out dismantling its weapons program or resuming negotiations unless U.S. drops its policy of "double standards" on the two countries' activities.

North Korea has seized on a recent South Korea acknowledgment of a plutonium-based nuclear experiment years ago, linking it with its own nuclear efforts and a tough stand in six-nation negotiations the United States is pushing to get North Korea to end its nuclear weapons program.

Seoul's revelations threatened to disrupt already troubled efforts to persuade Pyongyang to end its nuclear efforts.

"We declare again that we have no intention of developing or possessing nuclear weapons," South Korean Unification Minister Chung Dong-young said Saturday. "And we have never promoted a nuclear development for military purposes."

But in a statement on its official news agency, KCNA, North Korea said the United States was ignoring the nuclear activities of its allies while try-

ing to pressure the North to give up its nuclear capability.

It said the South intended to develop weapons with U.S. connivance.

"The continued disclosure of experiments in south Korea clearly proves that they were directed by the U.S. as they are aimed to develop nuclear weapons," KCNA said. "South Korea's clandestine nuclear experiments go to prove that the U.S. double standards are a fundamental factor of the nuclear proliferation."

"It is self-evident that the resumption of the talks can no longer be discussed unless the U.S. drops its hostile policy based on double standards toward (North Korea) and that the latter can never dismantle its nuclear deterrent force," KCNA said.

On Thursday, North Korea said it would not attend planned six-party talks on its nuclear activities until South Korea fully discloses the details of its secret atomic experiments.

South Korea acknowledged this month that it extracted a minute amount of plutonium in an experiment more than 20 years ago.

cuc meet

World

Report: Blair warned of Iraq chaos in '02

By EMMA ROSS
AP WRITER

LONDON (AP)—The government was accused Saturday of misleading the British public over plans for postwar Iraq after a newspaper reported that Prime Minister Tony Blair was warned a year before the invasion that postwar stability would be difficult.

Blair responded that the allies had a plan for postwar Iraq, but it had been frustrated by the insurgency.

Citing government documents marked "secret and personal," The Telegraph

newspaper said that Blair's chief policy adviser Sir David Manning warned Blair that President Bush had no answers to big questions, such as "what happens on the morning after."

The documents show that Foreign Secretary Jack Straw wrote to Blair a year before the conflict saying large numbers of troops would have to be committed for many years if order was to be maintained after the war, the newspaper reported.

He wrote that nobody seemed to know what would happen after a war had been won, writing: "There seems

to be a larger hole in this than anything," according to the Telegraph.

Blair responded to the report Saturday while taking a break from talks on Northern Ireland that were being held at Leeds castle, southeast of London.

Speaking of the warning he reportedly received from Straw, he said: "What it warned of was this: it's very important that we don't replace one dictator, Saddam Hussein, with another."

That is why, he said, the United States and Britain sought U.N. "blessing" for elections "to guide Iraq to democracy."

"The idea that we did not have a plan

for afterwards is simply not correct. We did, and we have unfolded that plan, but there are people in Iraq who are determined to stop us," he said.

Blair said Iraq was "the very crucible of the fight against terrorism, against groups that are prepared to kill, or take hostages, or do whatever they can in order to prevent Iraq becoming a stable, democratic country."

The Daily Telegraph said the documents showed Blair had signed up to the U.S. policy of regime change in March 2002, a year before the conflict started.

"This underlines very starkly not

only the reservations that existed in the (Foreign Office) about our ability to handle post-conflict Iraq, but also the lack of a comprehensive plan for the stabilization and reconstruction of Iraq, which we consistently called for before the war," said Michael Ancram, shadow foreign secretary for the opposition Conservative Party.

"The assurances given to us by both the Prime Minister and Jack Straw that such a plan was in hand were clearly misleading, and yet again cast grave doubts on the conduct of ministers in the run up to the war."



Amarilis Santos carries wood from her destroyed house in Ramon Santana, 90 kilometers east of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic on Saturday, Sep. 18, 2004.

Jeanne lashes Dominicans, aims at Bahamas

SAN PEDRO DE MACORIS, Dominican Republic (AP)—Tropical Storm Jeanne battered the Dominican Republic before heading to the Bahamas where the tempest, which has killed at least nine people, began to churn seas and stir deadly storm surges on Saturday.

Jeanne lost strength as it drove thousands of Dominicans from their homes by late Friday. But a few hours after being downgraded to a tropical depression, it strengthened again into a tropical storm with lashing winds.

Forecasters said it was too soon to predict if the storm would hit the United States. But Brian Jarvinen at the National Hurricane Center in Miami said he couldn't rule out the possibility that it might strike Florida, which has been struck by three hurricanes since mid-August.

The storm stalled over the Dominican Republic after coming ashore Thursday as a hurricane, with winds near 80 mph. It raged through Puerto Rico on Wednesday, dumping up to two feet of rain, flooding hundreds of

homes and downing power lines.

Jeanne became better organized as it moved over the sparsely populated outer islands of the southeast Bahamas Saturday morning.

The storm was blamed for seven deaths in the Dominican Republic, Juan Luis German, spokesman for the National Emergency Committee said Saturday.

Police said 11-year-old Pedro Hernandez drowned after the Guaemate River in his town of Higuiey burst its banks and swept him away.

UN threatens sanctions against Sudan

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—A divided U.N. Security Council approved a resolution Saturday threatening oil sanctions against Sudan unless the government reins in Arab militias blamed for a 19-month killing and looting spree in Darfur that the United States has called genocide.

The vote was 11-0 with four abstentions—China, Russia, Pakistan and Algeria. China, a permanent council member, said immediately after the vote that it would veto any future resolution that sought to impose sanctions on Sudan.

"I told the American government that the position of my government on sanctions is a firm one," said

China's U.N. Ambassador Wang Guangya. "We always believe that sanctions is not a helpful means to achieve political objectives. It will only make matters worse."

The resolution says the council would have to meet again to consider sanctions against Sudan's petroleum sector or other punitive measures if the government doesn't act quickly to stop the violence and bring the perpetrators to justice—or if it doesn't cooperate with an African Union monitoring force.

The resolution strongly endorses the deployment of a beefed-up African Union force with an expanded monitoring mission that would actively try

to prevent attacks and mediate to stop the conflict from escalating. More than 50,000 people have already died and over 1.2 million have fled their homes to escape the violence.

Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who was in the council chamber for the vote, also was authorized to rapidly appoint an international commission to investigate reports of human rights violations in Darfur and determine "whether or not acts of genocide have occurred."

Sudan's U.N. Ambassador Elfatih Erwa called the resolution "unfair," but said his government would implement it despite "the injustices it contains."

UN demands Iran halt uranium enrichment

VIENNA, Austria (AP)—For the first time, 35 nations in the U.N. atomic watchdog agency demanded Saturday that Iran freeze all work on uranium enrichment—a technology that can be used for nuclear arms—and said they would judge Tehran's compliance in two months.

The resolution passed by the agency was its toughest yet on Tehran but didn't go as far as the United States had sought—stopping short of saying Iran will automatically be sent to the U.N. Security Council for possible sanctions if it fails to meet the demands by November.

U.S. officials, however, insisted the 35-member board of the International Atomic Energy Agency must refer Iran

to the council when it meets again on Nov. 25 if Tehran doesn't comply.

"The issue is whether or not they're going to give up nuclear weapons" by the November meeting, U.S. Undersecretary of State John Bolton told The Associated Press. "The ball is in Iran's court."

"The time for decisive action is approaching," said Jackie Sanders, the chief U.S. delegate to the IAEA board meeting. "To wait until the IAEA finds the nuclear weapons ... is to wait until it is too late."

The United States says Iran's nuclear program is aimed at producing weapons, a claim Tehran denies.

The resolution passed unanimously Saturday said the board "considers it necessary" that Iran suspend all uranium enrichment and related programs.



N. Ireland talks end with no agreement

LEEDS CASTLE, England (AP)—High-pressure talks among rival Northern Ireland parties ended Saturday with no agreement to revive a Catholic-Protestant administration, but British Prime Minister Tony Blair insisted that a deal "historic in its meaning" may yet be achieved.

As tired delegations departed from Leeds Castle, the magnificent moat-encircled venue for talks that began Thursday, most factions suggested that the outlawed Irish Republican Army now holds the initiative.

A statement from the underground group, expected to detail its conditions for disarming fully and renouncing violence, may come within a week.

Without sufficiently clear-cut commitments, the Democratic Unionist Party insists it will never share power with Sinn Fein, the IRA-linked party that represents most of the north's Irish Catholics.

Russia teachers have higher hostage count

MOSCOW (AP)—Teachers from the southern Russian school that was the scene of a deadly siege by armed militants have counted 1,326 people who were held hostage—a tally far higher than official figures to date, a Russian newspaper reported Saturday.

The Izvestia daily said teachers, working with a U.N.-affiliated refu-

gee organization, looked at official class rolls at School No. 1, then tried to recall if the students had come to school on Sept. 1, when some 30 militants raided the school and herded the victims into a gymnasium.

Teacher Alena Giyoeva said the list was posted on the Web site www.beslan.ru.

Officials have yet to give a final definitive tally for the number of people held hostage from Sept. 1-3. In a published interview this week, Russian Prosecutor General Vladimir Ustinov said "more than 1,156 people" were held hostage.

Slain Haiti pastor's funeral postponed

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—The funeral of a slain evangelical pastor was postponed Saturday after tens of thousands tried to attend, underscoring frustration with crime in a country where rebels who ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide six months ago still patrol some towns.

The Rev. Jean-Moles Lovinsky Bertomieux, who hosted a popular radio show of religious songs and prayers, was shot Monday on his way to work in the capital of Port-au-Prince.

Police said Saturday they have arrested three suspects, accusing them of shooting the pastor after trying to rob him.

Tens of thousands filed past his open casket at an amphitheater in the presidential palace. Bertomieux's show had been one of the most listened to programs in the country of 8 million people.

Health & Fitness

mell labor
+red/blue

Life & Style

Miss Alabama crowned
Miss America

Former Miss America Ericka Dunlap, left, crowns Miss Alabama Deidre Downs, as Miss America 2005, during the Miss America Competition at the Atlantic City, N.J., Boardwalk Convention Hall Saturday, Sept. 18, 2004.

Miss Alabama Deidre Downs, an aspiring doctor who put off medical school to compete for the Miss America crown, won it Saturday night.

Downs, 24, of Birmingham, Ala., outsmarted and outperformed 51 other women in a spiced-up version of the 83-year-old pageant that included a head-to-head showdown between the last two contestants.

Downs, who sang "I'm Afraid This Must Be Love" for her talent routine, bested Miss Louisiana Jennifer Dupont, who performed a jazz dance for hers.

Miss North Carolina Kristin Elrod was second runner-up, followed by Miss Arkansas Lacy Fleming and Miss California Veena Goel.

Downs, who wants to be a pediatrician, will take up the cause of childhood cancer prevention during her reign as Miss America. In fact, she already has: She helped persuade the state of Alabama to offer a "Curing Childhood Cancer" car tag, the purchase of which will help fund cancer research.

Fifty-two women—including, for the first time ever, a contestant from

the U.S. Virgin Islands—competed for the crown in a two-hour show producers hoped would turn the tide on declining TV ratings.

Taking a page from reality TV, Miss America producers spiced up the prime-time special by enlisting "The Bachelor" host Chris Harrison, crooner Clay Aiken and some new production touches in a bid to keep people watching.

The telecast marked the 50th year since Sept. 11, 1954, when Lee Meriwether was crowned Miss America 1955 during the first Miss America pageant to be televised.

This year's pageant retained the same basic elements, but with plenty of updates, including the Miss America Quiz, an eight-question pop quiz on U.S. history, U.S. government and current events given to the five finalists.

The talent competition, which once showcased 10 of the contestants, was trimmed to two, and the traditional "parade of states" introduction of the contestants was reworked to eliminate some of the tedium.

In a nod to successful reality shows

like "Last Comic Standing" and "American Idol," Downs and Dupont squared off in a head-to-head talent showdown near the end of the telecast to help the seven-judge panel decide who got to make the tearful runway walk in Boardwalk Hall.

Downs will get more than that, though: She earned a \$50,000 college scholarship, a modicum of overnight celebrity and a yearlong reign that can net up to \$200,000 in appearance fees.

Citing hour-to-hour Nielsen ratings that traditionally ebb during the talent competition, pageant producers axed the often-amateurish singing, dancing or baton-twirling acts that had been a part of Miss America since 1938.

The swimsuit contest was briefer, too, in a sense. Showing more skin than ever, the contestants competed in racy two-piece swimsuits provided to Miss America under a two-year sponsorship deal with maker Speedo.

Downs succeeds Miss America 2004 Ericka Dunlap, 22, an aspiring attorney from Orlando, Fla., who spent her year advocating the celebration of diversity. (AP)

Madonna makes Israeli midnight pilgrimage

JERUSALEM (AP)—Pop diva Madonna made a midnight pilgrimage to a Jerusalem cemetery early Sunday, holding a mystical candlelit ceremony at the grave of a Jewish sage.

The singer is in Israel on a five-day spiritual quest along with 2,000 other students of Kabbalah, or Jewish mysticism.

Following her graveside visit, Madonna went to the Western Wall, a part of Judaism's holiest site where the biblical temples once stood.

The arrival of Israel's biggest celebrity visitor in years has created a frenzy among her fans and the media. Others have been critical of the star's interest in the esoteric Jewish mysticism.

Madonna was raised a Roman Catholic, but she has become an avid devotee of Jewish mysticism in recent years. She has adopted the Hebrew name Esther, wears a red thread on her wrist to ward off the evil eye and reportedly refuses to perform on the Jewish Sabbath.

No screaming fans were waiting for Madonna Sunday as she arrived with her husband, Guy Ritchie, at the Kiryat Shaul cemetery, flanked by black clad police escorts, assault rifles slung over their shoulders.

The blue and red revolving lights of the patrol cars cast an eerie glow over the terraced, hillside graveyard as the couple walked past the tombstones to the grave of the Kabbalist sage Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag.

Polish-born Ashlag is the renowned author of the Sulam, the ladder, a commentary on the core Kabbalistic text, the Zohar. He died in 1954.



U.S. pop superstar Madonna visits the tomb of Kabbalist Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag, a Jewish mystic, in the Givat Shaul cemetery in Jerusalem, early Sunday Sept. 19, 2004.

Madonna, wearing jeans, a black-and-gray checkered sweater with a matching cap and a large diamond encrusted letter E on a chain to symbolize her new name, spent more than an hour inside the stone mausoleum, placing candles on the tomb, praying and chanting.

Led by a rabbi, Madonna and her small entourage recited blessings over food and wine, drank from small plastic cups and circled the raised stone grave. Toward the end of the ceremony, a visibly moved Madonna wiped tears from her eyes.

Adherents of Jewish mysticism believe that praying at the graves of

sages can help achieve one's wishes. Millions make pilgrimages every year to the more than 100 of these burial sites across the Holy Land, praying for health, children or to find a mate.

Madonna was to have traveled to northern Israel, where most of these holy sites are situated, but sources in the police, who were to have provided security, said she had canceled that part of her trip.

The singer has been surrounded by heavy security during her trip and two of her guards were arrested Friday after they brawled with photographers trailing the star.

As Madonna prayed inside, her guards held up black cloths and flashed lights outside in an attempt to block photographers and cameramen from the proceedings.

After leaving the cemetery, Madonna traveled to the Western Wall but remained inside her vehicle and did not go down to the sacred site.

At the site she received a mixed welcome from young worshippers, with some chanting, "She has no right to be here."

Some have opposed Madonna's visit and involvement in Kabbalah, charging that the raunchy, materialistic values the singer has promoted in the past were contrary to religious values.

But others welcomed the diva and said she deprived herself of a spiritual experience by remaining in her vehicle. "Why did she not come out of the car, we were waiting for her," said Hadass Chen, who came to see the singer. "You don't feel the vibe if you don't touch the wall."

Martin Short film closes Toronto festival

TORONTO (AP)—There could hardly be a more appropriate movie to close the Toronto International Film Festival Saturday night than Martin Short's "Jiminy Glick in Lalawood."

Shot at the festival in 2002 with a bevy of star cameos, the schmoozefest satire plops the obese and obnoxious celebrity interviewer Jiminy Glick (Short in a fat-suit) into a murder-mystery. It's like "The Player" on laughing gas.

Toronto's influential festival, one of the world's largest, traditionally ends on a lighter note after 10 days of more than 300 films and countless parties. Short's film adroitly skewers media, stars and their handlers alike, but he says it's about his characters, not the industry.

"I don't view it as something about the industry itself. It's a dumb guy with power," Short told The Associated Press in an interview Saturday. "I could see Glick being a member of Parliament, easily."

Short, a Canadian who got his break in the 1980s on the influential television show Second City TV that also produced John Candy, Eugene Levy and Catherine O'Hara, wrote the film with other Second City alumni, his old-

er brother Michael and Paul Flaherty. Vadim Jean directed.

Short lifts his character from his Comedy Central television show "Prime Time Glick," adding Jan Hooks as his gaudy wife Dixie, and chubby twin sons Matthew and Modine.

A celebrity interviewer from Butte, Mont., Glick is catapulted to fame at the Toronto festival for snagging an interview with a "reclusive and elusive" writer/director/star of the fictional "Growing Up Gandhi."

Glick falls asleep during the screening of the hopelessly bad biopic of the young Gandhi as a boxer with flourishes of "Raging Bull" flash bulbs and "American Beauty" rose petals.

His ignorantly glowing review lands him a spot with lightweight Gandhi ego-star Ben Di Carlo, played by Corey Pearson, who describes India's caste system as "kind of what we have in Hollywood, but on a bigger scale."

Then Glick snares himself in a deadly film-noir sex scandal with rappers, a fading alcoholic actress, her seedy European svengali and parallels to the 1958 killing of mobster Johnny Stompanato by the lesbian daughter of his lover, Lana Turner.



By JOE WEINDL
Special to the
Saipan Tribune



palacios

Revelation of child abuse is tearing family apart

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: I have been married to "Nick" for 14 years. We have a beautiful 10-year-old daughter, "Betsy." I recently learned that when Nick was between the ages of 15 and 19, he molested his younger sister. My husband is now 48 and swears that, during those years, he was a "messed up, suicidal" teen.

All this was recently revealed by the sister, who is now 42. She told her parents who, in turn, wrote an ugly letter to Nick. I opened it by mistake and, unfortunately, read it all. It shocked me to the core. I feel so sad for his sister.

Nick will be seeing a counselor to work through what happened 30 years ago and to try to put everything in perspective. I know he is not the monster his sister describes, and I know he would never hurt Betsy.

I wish I could just smooth everything over. How do I explain to Betsy that her grandparents will never visit again? Nick is considering moving out to distance himself and not hurt us anymore. I know I could speak to a counselor, but I don't have much faith in what one could offer besides being someone to vent to.

LOST IN LAS VEGAS

DEAR LOST: Before trying to smooth anything over, make an appointment with a child psychologist and take your daughter. Your husband molested his sister not once, but for a long time. It's possible that he's also done something to Betsy, but she was so young and innocent she didn't recognize it for what it was.

In cases like this, what happened cannot be ignored. It might be better if your husband did move out for a while, because your daughter is about at the age her aunt was when the molestations began. And you, dear lady, should by all means schedule some sessions with a psychologist or psychiatrist who understands childhood sexual abuse. Counseling isn't just "venting"; it can also be listening to and learning from someone with insight, education and experience. Trust me.

□ □ □ □ □

DEAR ABBY: My brother, sister and I grew up abused and neglected by our parents. There was never any affection or love in our home.

Now that we are grown, we have all established our own families and have little to do with our parents. Because we never discussed our home lives with anyone but ourselves, to outsiders our parents appear to be wonderful people. In the eyes of friends and other relatives, we are now "shirking our duty" because we have "abandoned" our parents.

I live far enough away that I don't have to deal with this problem, but my siblings face frequent criticism. What should be the appropriate response to those who continually ask why we don't visit our parents?

SAFELY AWAY IN DULUTH, GA.

DEAR SAFELY AWAY: Your brother and sister have my sympathy. Unless they want to give a blow-by-blow description of what their lives were like growing up, which I'd advise against, their best response would be, "This subject is painful for me and very personal. I'd appreciate it if you didn't mention it again." And then change the subject.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable—and most frequently requested—poems and essays, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)



Dear Abby

Macaulay Culkin released after drug arrest

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP)—Former child star Macaulay Culkin was arrested on drug charges Friday during a traffic stop, authorities said. The 24-year-old actor, best known for his role in the "Home Alone" movies, was taken into custody on complaints of possession of a controlled dangerous substance without a valid prescription and possession of marijuana, according to the Oklahoma County Sheriff's office.

Culkin, who lives in New York

City, was booked into the Oklahoma County Jail and released after posting \$4,000 bond, a jailer said.

Authorities confiscated about 17 grams of marijuana from a vehicle in which Culkin was a passenger. Officers also found 16 milligrams of prescription medications used to control anxiety and seizures, according to a police report.

Culkin was in a vehicle driven

by a 22-year-old New York City man who was stopped for driving 70 mph in a 60-mph speed zone and for making an improper lane change. After receiving a verbal warning, the driver allowed police to search the vehicle.

Culkin told an officer there was \$3,000 in a bag on the floor of the car. The officer opened it and found a clear baggie of what appeared



Culkin

Elton John tells musicians to pay dues

SHANGHAI, China (AP)—A word of advice from Elton John to up-and-coming musicians: Pay your dues.

"Bands today have to learn their craft by putting the hard work in that we did when we were young performers," said John, who was in Shanghai Saturday for his first shows in China in his four-decade career.

"We didn't just make a video, then go out on the road. We were on the road before we had got a record contract," said the singer and pianist, who started out in the early 1960s toiling on the British pub circuit with the soul act Bluesology.

John will perform at the first of a pair of concerts in China on Sunday. He said the 2 1/2-hour set would feature up to 26 songs, including the new single "Answer in the Sky" from the album "Peach Tree Road," due for release in November.

Don't expect any feather boas, though.

Known for his flamboyant costumes, the performer once dubbed Captain Fantastic said he would be wearing just one outfit on stage—a creation by Japanese designer Yohji Yamamoto.

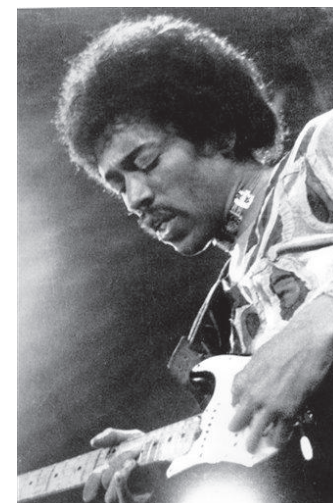
At a news conference on Saturday, John wore saucer-sized, gold-rimmed sunglasses, a black

jacket and collarless scarlet shirt with a single silver earring.

With a career that ranges from the bouncy rock-and-roll of "Saturday Night's Alright For Fighting" to the soundtrack for Disney's "The Lion King," John said he listens to new artists for a dose of "energy, rawness and instinctiveness."

"I get my inspiration from young bands, young songwriters," John said.

Asked with whom he would most like to work, John named Canadian singer-songwriter Rufus Wainwright, his collaborator on 2001's "Songs From the West Coast."



AP

This is a 1970 file photo of rock and roll guitarist Jimi Hendrix performing on the Isle of Wight in England.

Long-lost Hendrix concert tape discovered

STOCKHOLM, Sweden (AP)—Technicians at Sweden's public television have unearthed an unexpected delight for music lovers—a complete original recording of a Jimi Hendrix concert in Stockholm from 1969 on a tape long thought to have been destroyed.

The unmarked tape was recently found stashed on a shelf deep inside the station's enormous archives during a project to transfer archived material from tape and film to digital, SVT spokeswoman Catarina Wilson said Friday.

"They looked through the tape and found it had some Jimi Hendrix," Wilson said. "Then they saw it had a lot of Jimi Hendrix—the entire concert, which is what makes this tape unique."

The black-and-white recording from Stockholm's concert hall was ordered destroyed by a producer in 1969, a time when it was too expensive to keep all raw footage, Wilson said.

Hendrix died in 1970.

Wilson said it was likely that one of the state-run network's workers, perhaps a Hendrix fan, stashed it on the shelf, where it sat for 35 years gathering dust.

Part of the 56-minute concert was broadcast on SVT in 1969, before the Jimi Hendrix Experience disbanded, but it has never been shown in its entirety. SVT is determining if it still has the rights to show the entire broadcast of the concert.



AP

BOXING FAN

Actress Nicole Kidman is shown at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas before the start of the Bernard Hopkin vs. Oscar De La Hoya unified middleweight title fight on Saturday, Sept. 18, 2004.

Host says Rather criticism got him fired

SEATTLE (AP)—A radio talk-show host said Saturday he has been fired for criticizing CBS newsman Dan Rather's handling of challenges to the authenticity of memos about President Bush's National Guard service.

"On the talk show that I host, or hosted, I said I felt Rather should either retire or be forced out over this," said Brian Maloney, whose weekly "The Brian

Maloney Show" aired for three years on KIRO-AM Radio, a CBS affiliate here.

Maloney says he made that statement on his Sept. 12 program. He was fired Friday, he said.

"What they have expressed is essentially that my show went in a direction they're not comfortable with," Maloney said.

KIRO Radio's general manager, Ken Berry, did not return

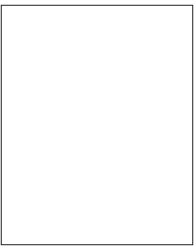
a call seeking comment. A staff member at the station said Berry would not comment because it is a personnel matter.

Rather cited the memos, purportedly written by Bush's late squadron commander, in a Sept. 8 "60 Minutes II" segment. The memos indicated the commander was pressured to "sugar coat" Bush's performance and that Bush ignored an order to take a physical.

Pastimes



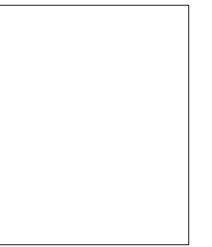




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SAIPAN TRIBUNE